

Expedients proposed for the Easing and Advantaging the Coal-Trade, and Lessning the Price of Coals in London, and other Places, &c.

I. **T**hat all Ships may have Liberty, (if they find it for their conveniency) to take in such Beer and other Provision, as they shall at any time want for their Voyages, in or about Sheilds, and not to be forced (as now they are) to send Seven Miles up the River to Newcastle for the same, whereby they often lose the opportunity of a fair Wind, or a Convoy, and by consequence their whole Voyage.

II. That it may be lawful for any Ship in Distress, to make use of any Pilot or Carpenter, though no Freeman of Newcastle, (which is now by no means permitted) for whilst they send so far as Newcastle for help, (which when they do, they cannot have from thence, but at Excessive Rates) the Ships that want, or have wanted such help, may be, and often have been cast away, before such Pilot or Carpenter could come to them.

III. That a Free Ballast-Shore, may be Built by the Owners of Jarrowlike near Sheilds, or any other Owners of Lands and Grounds there. And that all Ships may, (if for their own Benefit) be at liberty to lay Ballast there, and not forced (as now they are) to carry it several Miles, up a dangerous River to Newcastle Shores; In as much as Jarrowlike-Shoar, when Built, will be greatly for the Advantage of the River, and all Ships Trading upon the same. And it is farther offered to Consideration, and it will easily be Demonstrated, That if these things were done, the River would be much Bettered, and made Deeper, and more Navigable, which would Encourage the Building of Great Ships, which are the most proper for that Trade, and such as would be Useful for the Defence of the Kingdome, in time of War: Besides, by these Means, Masters of Ships might make Two or Three Voyages in the Year, more than now they do, by reason of the quick Dispatch they would then receive, above what they now have; the consequence whereof must needs be, That Coals, Glas, Salt, and Millstones, which are the proper Commodities of those Parts, would be much Cheaper to the Subject than now they are, and the great Duty laid on Coals for several years to come, be less felt by the Poor than now it is.

The Town of Newcastle Answer to the Proposals above-mentioned.

TO the First, it is answered, That the Mayor and Burgeses of Newcastle, have by Prescription the Survey and Government of the Port and River there; which Port and River, are within the Bounds and Limits of the Borough of Newcastle. And the said Mayor and Burgeses have from time to time (whereof the Memory of Man runs not to the contrary,) had the sole Vending of all Beer and Ale sold to Ships Trading to that Port: And this is, in effect, no more than all Corporations by Prescription enjoy, That none shall exercise a Trade within their Corporation, but the Members of it. And it seems to be as reasonable to take away the Priviledges of all other Corporations, as to take away this: And besides, the publick is no way injured; for Ships do not lose their Voyages by it, because the Ships may take in their Beer and Ale at Sheilds from Newcastle, in a quarter of the time they can take in their Coals; for they go two, three, and sometimes four Miles above Newcastle for their Coals. And this very Point, as to the sole vending of Beer and Ale by the Mayor and Burgeses within the said Port, has been lately Tryed in his Majesties Court of Exchequer, and found by a substantial Jury for the Mayor and Burgeses, and a Decree thereupon made for the same.

To the Second, it is Answered, That it is lawful in that Port, for any Ship-Master to use his own Carpenter: and if the Ship be in distress, the Master may use any Carpenters whatsoever at Sheilds: and besides, Care is taken that there be always Carpenters and Pilots that are Freemen of Newcastle, that live at Sheilds, near the Mouth of the Haven, to serve such Masters of Ships as have occasion to use their Services there, and that at Reasonable Prices, lower than in other places. And the Mayor of Newcastle may regulate the Prices, if unreasonable Demands be made; and it is a great Mistake to affirm, That any Ships have been lost in that Harbour, for want of Carpenters or Pilots, and the same cannot be proved.

To the Third, the Answer is, That *Farrowslike* is no fit place for a Shore, being near the Mouth of the Haven, because the unavoidable fall of Ballast would make a Sand-Bed, which would hinder Ships to pass in and out. It would be a Nuisance to have a Shore there, there being no Foundation to erect a Wall for a Ballast-Key. And it would be further inconvenient, the Channel of the River being Narrow in that place, it would make the Current so quick, that no Ships could lie at Anchor there, or Keels come to cast Coals or Ballast there. And it would hinder the passage of Ships in the said River, and would be an injury to the Mayor and Burgeses to make an Act of Parliament to erect a Shore at the place desired; for they do prescribe, That no Shores should be built upon that River without their Licence; if this were not, the River had been long since blockt up, and it were impossible to prevent *Nuisances* to the said River, if the Mayor and Burgeses had not the Survey and Government of it: For every Man that has Land upon the said River, might be at Liberty to build into the River as far as they please.

This *Prescription* has been likewise Tryed at Law at the Bar of the Court of Exchequer, and found for the Mayor and Burgeses: And why may not all, or any the Franchises of all other *Corporations*, be taken away by Act of Parliament as well as this? And there is no inconvenience to Ships that Trade to that Port, for want of a Shore there, because there are Shores four or five Miles lower than *Newcastle*, seated in convenient places, where Ships cast their Ballast, and take in their Coals without danger.

The Mayor and Burgeses being Conservators of the River and Port of *Tine*, (a place of great Import to the Kingdom, and Nursery of Seamen and Navigation) and having an ancient Court for the Government and Preservation of the River and Port, do never give leave to build a Ballast Shore, until the place be viewed by a Jury of Masters of the *Trinity-House* and Pilots, and they upon their Oaths give a Verdict, that the place is convenient, and without Prejudice to the River.

That the *Expedients* proposed, will not in any sort lessen the *Price of Coals*; for the same Tide that will carry Ships to the place designed for a Shore, will carry them to some other Shores or Wharfs that are already erected. And the same Wind that will carry Ships out from the one place will carry them out from the other. And the Ballast is cast out upon as cheap and easy terms from some of the other Shores already erected, as it can possibly be from the other place designed for a Shore. Besides, the Charges for Lighters to bring down Coals to Ships lying at *Farrowslike*, will be greater than the Rates are at the other Shores already erected upon the River. And Lighters which bring Coals to the Ships riding at *Farrowslike*, will not be able in great Westerly Winds (which often happen) to go up again to fetch more Coals to Load the Ships there; although from the other Shores they may go up, notwithstanding the greatness of the Wind.

And in truth this is but a design for some particular Mens interest, (upon pretence of Publick good) which they have long endeavoured by several means to effect at the Council-Board, and at Law, but could not prevail.

The Reply to the Answer of Newcastle.

1. **T**Heir Answer to the first Expedient confesses matter of Fact to be what is complained of; And whether it be a reasonable thing for any Town by Prescription only, to hinder all persons, though eight or ten Miles from the Town from selling Beer, Ale, and other Provisions to Ships, is left to the Wisdom of Parliament to Judge; And 'tis humbly conceiv'd most proper for that High Court to Determine, since by their own Papers they say no Remedy can be had for it elsewhere. And whereas they say, it seems as reasonable to take away the Privileges of all other Corporations, as this; We joyn Issue upon it, and say so too, in case there be any other places that under pretence of their Privileges, hinder all but themselves from buying or selling any Commodities (especially Victual) eight or ten Miles round: But as yet no other such place is known; When 'tis, it may be complain'd of with hopes of Redress. And 'tis a fallacy to say 'tis no Injury to the Publick, because Ships go two, three, or four Miles above *Newcastle* for Coals: possibly some small Vessels may go so high; but great Ships which are chiefly intended to be provided for in this Bill, will not willingly venture to come within five or six Miles of the Town.

2. To the second, That Ships may use their own Carpenters which come in their Ships, is true, because they cannot possibly hinder it; but if any other Carpenter (on what occasion soever) that lives thereabouts, not being a Freeman of *Newcastle* presumes to help any Ship in Distress, he will certainly be imprisoned and arbitrarily punished for it, as several have been. And 'tis no mistake to say

say that some Ships have been lost, and many damaged for want of help in that Port, which hath formerly been proved upon Oath: and the great damage that Ships come to by restraining Carpenters and Pilots will be made plainly appear when it comes to proof; and all Ship-Matters and Owners hope for Redress in it.

Whereas they say, that *Farrowlike* is no fit place for a Ballast-shore, because so near the mouth of the Haven, why then were Ballast-shores permitted to be made below it nearer to the mouth of the said Haven where the River is narrower than at that place? And the same reason that they give against this Shoar holds, and is more against any other Shoar in the River; so that by this Argument there ought to be none at all for the unavoidable fall of Ballast into the River will be more in other places than here: For when Ships throw their Ballast out into Lighters first, much of it often falls into the River, and the rest is sometimes at Night thrown over-board into the River to save Carriage up to the Wharfs by Lighter-men, and also some will fall out as it is unlading there: Whereas, if there were a Ballast-shoar at *Farrowlike*, great Ships might the first Tide come up to the side of it and unlade their Ballast where there can be no possible fall of Ballast into the River, but what falls in unlading 'twixt the Ships and the Wharf, which at Low-water may and will be easily thrown up again that other Ships may come and unlade there. And whereas they say that it will Choak up the River, It will clear it of the Sand which continually washeth out of *Farrowlike*, and some other Sand now in the River. And as for their saying there can be no Foundation, why do they then oppose it? since if it cannot be done, it can be no prejudice to them. And it will not at all alter the Current of the River at times of Lading and Unlading Ships; it being 3 quarters Ebb before the Coal-Lighters come down. And to what they say of Westerly Winds hindring Lighters to go up to fetch Coals down to the Ships; Surely, Lighters that are Low-built may more easily go up for Coals than Ships which are much Higher and have Masts. And the Prescription they plead against any of this, (though 'tis believ'd they can never make't out to have been without interruption) however 'tis the Grievance desired to be redress'd by this Bill.

Whereas 'tis Pretended to be carried on for Private Interest only; The contrary will appear by reading the Reports and Reasons of the Trinity-House; which are as followeth.

According to your Majesties Order in Council bearing date August the 5th. We have considered of the Allegations of *Sir Charles Adderly* Knight, and *John Crook* Esquire, concerning the erecting of a Ballast Shore at *Farrowes-Slake* near South Shield in the County of *Duresme*; And do humbly make our Report that we are of opinion That a Ballast-Wharfe at South-Shields will be of great use and benefit to all Ships Trading in the River *Tine* for Coals, for these Reasons.

1ly, That it will prevent the loss of Ships in their coming for *Tynmouth-Bar*, for that they have and do at this day cast out great part of their Ballast before they come to the Bar, so to avoid the great charge after they are in the River of carrying up their Ballast in Keels to *Newcastle*, after which meeting with foul weather they have many times been Cast away by reason of their Lightness.

2ly, It will be a means to Secure great Ships from the Casualties which befall them; by their coming a Ground many have been Lost going up or coming down the River, at Least it will prevent the wronging of them when they lie on hard Ground or Rocks, going to or coming from *Newcastle*, whereby the Ships will last the longer; and it will also give them a much quicker dispatch in their Voyages.

3ly, It will be an Encouragement for men to build great Ships for that Trade such as may be useful for defence of the Kingdom in time of War, and much more proper for that Trade than small Vessels.

4ly, That the Price of taking out the Ballast at Shields being moderately set, It will be a great Incouragement to Navigation, for that the price of taking it out by the Town of *Newcastle* is very high.

5ly, That by means hereof Masters of Ships may make two or three Voyages more in a year, the charge of taking out their Ballast being lessened, and the time of going up the River being saved and their Ships hereby the better preserved, and being great Ships most proper for that Trade they may sell Coals much cheaper to the benefit of the Publick and get more money to their Owners than now they do, and all this with less hazard; All which we humbly submit to your Sacred Majesties most prudent Consideration.

Thomas Middleton

Edward Crispe Deputy Mr.

Henry Tederman

William Wileey

Henry Shears D. Warden,

John Cox

Edward Seaman } Wardens.

